Continuity of Operations Planning System

Project Business Case

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BUSINESS REQUIREMENTS:

Project Executive Summary

On July 30, 2002, Governor Hoeven issued a directive to all state entities to develop a continuity of operations plan to ensure the continuity of state government in the event of a manmade or natural disaster. The purpose of this project is to implement the use of customized software to guide state agencies in the development of their continuity of operations plans. Upon the completion of the uniform plans among the agencies, a continuum of government plan for the state of North Dakota will be developed.

Business Problem

Currently, not all agencies have formal recovery plans, and those that do have them do not have plans that work in conjunction with the plans of the other agencies. The Governor's mandate indicates that the agencies are to have a coordinated recovery capability. A software application is being sought as past history has proven that manually developed and maintained recovery plans are incomplete, difficult to maintain, and hard to audit to ensure their timely release. The reason for obtaining software is to fill the voids that currently exist in the development of an agency or a statewide disaster recovery capability.

Association With Other Projects

This project will be working with Connect ND to import the employee, vendor and asset information that's been collected in that project. This will save agencies from having to submit the same information to two different projects.

Assessment

The problem of inconsistency in planning efforts will be considered successful when the following things have been accomplished:

- All agencies have access to the software to achieve a standardized planning capability where all state agencies have the same components to their plans.
- Employee, vendor and asset information for each state agency has been imported from Connect ND.
- A maintainable central plan repository (a single data base) for state entities that is globally accessible via the Internet and hosted at Information Technology Department (ITD) has been created.
- Continuity of operations plans for each state agency has been developed and stored on the COG server.

Impacts on Agencies

Agencies will need to send staff to training to learn how to use the software to develop plans. Staff will need to be reassigned to complete the plan in the customized software to meet deadlines set by the COG Team.

COST/BENEFIT ANALYSIS:

Benefits

All state agencies will benefit from this software application, as it will ensure that they have plans that are up to date, maintainable, and coordinated with the remaining agencies. This will provide more understanding and communications between agencies as priorities of restoration are worked out together. Consistency in equipment and procedures will provide mutual aid between agencies.

This project will enhance the response and restoration if a man-made or natural disaster should strike one building, one agency, multiple agencies, an entire city or the entire state. Because of this project there is the assurances that services to the citizens of the state will be maintained with minimal disruption.

Additional benefits of this project is in the following areas of Information Technology (IT):

- Assist agencies in identifying which IT equipment is considered essential within twenty-four hours, vital within seventy-two hours and which can wait longer to be restored.
- Assist agencies in understanding how to contact Information Technology Department (ITD) for assistance in restoration.
- Assist ITD in prioritizing which IT systems and agencies need to be restored in what order.

RFP Requirements

The Request for Proposal (RFP) set out the following requirements for vendors to base their software and services proposals.

a. Software that:
    1. Provides an automated process whereby State agencies can create business continuity and disaster recovery plans.
    2. Develops plans that work in conjunction with the plans of all other agencies, and can be implemented individually.
    3. Includes functionality such as creation of calling trees, report creation, ability to track recovery and continuity resources, scalability, identification of possible conflicts for resources among business entities, ability to handle import data from many sources (Word, Excel, etc.);
    4. Interfaces with the State's SQL Server and Oracle databases;
    5. Has the ability to be customized;
    6. Provides security;
    7. Has been successfully used by other government units to produce business continuity and disaster recovery plans;
b. Training resources to include:
        1. on-line and on-sight training;
        2. a train-the-trainer program,
        3. a commitment to present a demonstration of the software application at Risk Management's April 30-May 1, 2003 Seminar in Bismarck, North Dakota;
c. Maintenance; and
d. Upgrades.

Software Alternatives

Based on the above requirements the following are the four alternatives that were identified in the Request for Proposal.

Alternatives	
#1	Vendor A with proposal to develop an automated process whereby state agencies can create business continuity and disaster recovery plans.
#2	Vendor B with a Windows-based business recovery planning system that combines modular plan design, relational data base management and ease of use to give planners a system that produces flexible, easy-to-maintain plans.
#3	Vendor C with a web-enabled business continuity planning system that combines modular plan design, relational data base management and ease of use to give planners a system that produces flexible, easy-to-maintain plans.
#4	Vendor D with a browser independent, web-based tool that enables users to build, customize, maintain, print plans over an intranet or Internet.

Alternatives Evaluation Criteria

Each software proposal was evaluated by the RFP Review Committee on the following criteria and scored with the following rating scale.

Criteria A **Understanding the Project (Maximum 5 Points)**
a. Has the vendor demonstrated a thorough understanding of the purpose and scope of the project?
b. How well has the vendor identified pertinent issues and potential problems related to the project?
c. Has the vendor demonstrated an understanding of the deliverables the State expects it to provide?
d. Has the vendor demonstrated an understanding of the State's time schedule and can meet it?

Rating Scale for Use in Assessing Vendor Responses

Value	**Explanation**
0	Not addressed or response of no value
3	Limited applicability
5	Substantial or total applicability

Criteria B **Software Capability (Maximum 40 Points)**
a. Does the methodology depict a logical approach to fulfilling the requirements of the RFP?
b. Does the offered software provide the functionality described in Section 2.02 of the RFP?
c. Will the required software capabilities be available within described time schedule?

Rating Scale for Use in Assessing Vendor Responses

Value	**Explanation**
0	Not addressed or response of no value
10	Limited applicability
20	Some applicability
30	Substantial applicability
40	Total applicability

Criteria C
Management Plan for the Project (Maximum 15 Points)

a. How well does the management plan support all of the project requirements and logically lead to the deliverables required in the RFP?

b. How well is accountability completely and clearly defined?

c. To what extent does the vendor already have the hardware, software, equipment, and licenses necessary to perform the contract?

d. Does it appear that the vendor can meet the schedule set out in the RFP?

e. Has the vendor gone beyond the minimum tasks necessary to meet the objectives of the RFP?

f. Is the proposal practical, feasible, and within budget?

g. Is the proposal submitted responsive to all material requirements in the RFP?

h. Has information been provided that the software has been used by other governmental units to perform similar services?

Rating Scale for Use in Assessing Vendor Responses

Value	**Explanation**
0	Not addressed or response of no value
5	Limited applicability
10	Some applicability
15	Substantial or total applicability

Criteria D
Experience & Qualifications (Maximum 15 Points)

a. How well has the firm demonstrated experience in completing similar projects on time and within budget?

b. How successful is the general history of the firm regarding timely and successful completion of projects?

c. Has the firm provided letters of reference from previous clients?

Rating Scale for Use in Assessing Vendor Responses

Value	Explanation
0	Not addressed or response of no value
5	Limited applicability
10	Some applicability
15	Substantial or total applicability

Criteria E
Cost Evaluation Factor (Maximum 20 Points)

After making any adjustments for reciprocal preference, to evaluate the cost the price is converted to points. The proposal with the lowest cost receives the maximum points allowed. All other proposals receive a percentage of the points available based on their cost relationship to the lowest cost proposal. Divide the lowest cost proposal received by the cost of the proposal being rated, and multiply the results by the maximum points. The result is the awarded points. This is determined by applying the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Price of Lowest Cost Proposal}}{\textit{Price of Proposal Being Rated}} \times \text{Maximum points available} = \text{Awarded Price points}$$

Example: The total point available for cost in the RFP was forty (40) points. The cost of the lowest acceptable proposal is $100,000. Therefore the lowest proposal cost of $100,000 would be awarded forty (40) points. The second lowest acceptable proposal submitted a cost of $125,000. The second lowest proposal cost of $125,000 would be awarded thirty-two (32) points.

$$\frac{\$100,000}{\$125,000} = .80 \times 40 = 32 \text{ points}$$

Contingency of Government Software RFP **Weighting Of Evaluation Factors**		
Factors	**Weight**	**Total Points**
Cost	20%	20
Technical:	80%	
Understanding of the Project	5%	5
Software Capability	40%	40
Management Plan for the Project	20%	20
Experience and Qualifications	15%	15
Total Points		100

Alternatives Comparisons

The following charts show the scores by the RFP Review Committee that were determined on each criterion for each vendor.

CRITERIA A	SCORER	Score for Vendor A	Score for Vendor B	Score for Vendor C	Score for Vendor D
Understanding the Project	Evaluator 1	2	3	3	3
	Evaluator 2	3	5	5	5
	Evaluator 3	4	5	5	5
	Evaluator 4	3	5	5	5
	Evaluator 5	3	4	4	5
	Evaluator 6	4	4	4	4
	Evaluator 7	1	5	5	5
	TOTAL	20	31	31	32

CRITERIA B	SCORER	Score for Vendor A	Score for Vendor B	Score for Vendor C	Score for Vendor D
Software Capability	Evaluator 1	0	30	30	25
	Evaluator 2	5	35	35	40
	Evaluator 3	20	30	40	40
	Evaluator 4	15	30	40	40
	Evaluator 5	10	10	30	40
	Evaluator 6	25	30	35	35
	Evaluator 7	0	20	30	40
	TOTAL	75	185	240	255

CRITERIA C	SCORER	Score for Vendor A	Score for Vendor B	Score for Vendor C	Score for Vendor D
Management Plan for the Project	Evaluator 1	0	12	15	10
	Evaluator 2	5	15	10	15
	Evaluator 3	12	18	18	20
	Evaluator 4	7	10	10	18
	Evaluator 5	5	13	13	15
	Evaluator 6	15	15	15	15
	Evaluator 7	0	10	10	20
	TOTAL	44	93	91	113

CRITERIA D	SCORER	Score for Vendor A	Score for Vendor B	Score for Vendor C	Score for Vendor D
Experience & Qualifications	Evaluator 1	10	10	10	10
	Evaluator 2	8	10	7	10
	Evaluator 3	12	15	13	15
	Evaluator 4	8	10	10	15
	Evaluator 5	10	15	15	15
	Evaluator 6	10	10	10	14
	Evaluator 7	5	15	15	15
	TOTAL	63	85	80	94

CRITERIA E		Score for Vendor A	Score for Vendor B	Score for Vendor C	Score for Vendor D
Contract Cost					
	TOTAL	13.81	20	15.64	7.59

This chart shows a computation of all scores for all criteria identified in the RFP process.

CRITERIA	Score for Vendor A	Score for Vendor B	Score for Vendor C	Score for Vendor D
A. Understanding the Project TOTAL	20	31	31	32
B. Software Capability TOTAL	75	185	240	255
C. Management Plan for the Project TOTAL	44	93	91	113
D. Experience & Qualifications TOTAL	63	85	80	94
E. Contract Cost TOTAL	13.81	20	15.64	7.59
TOTAL:	215.81	414	457.64	501.59

Justification of Alternative Chosen

When a point system is used in the RFP process, the award of the contract or the beginning of negotiation is based on the vendor with the highest total number points. Based on this evaluation method Alternative #4 was chosen because it met the most requirements.

Risk Analysis

As with any new project there are risks. Below are some of the identified risks and processes to help manage and mitigate the risks.

Project Constraints

There are several project constraints. First there is no designated budget for this project. The funding for this project is expected to come from multiple sources. There will be competition for Homeland Security Grants to get additional funding to assist in purchasing, hosting, and maintaining software along with training. The agencies will have to incur expenses to develop their plans.

A second project constraint is the lack of designated full time staff to see to the development and implementation of this project. The Governor's appointed COG Team members will need to assign staff to work on this project.

A third project constraint is the interdependence with Connect ND. Time estimates for this project is dependent that Connect ND will meet their schedule so information will be available for importing.

Identifying Issues During the Project

The ability to identify issues during the project will require a project manager and a plan. The project manager should set up meetings with COG Team to get approval for the different phases of the project that are identified in the plan and address issues that arise to keep the project on track. A project pilot team that can offer information on what the special needs of agencies are so they can be addressed in customized software should meet with the project manager. The project pilot team can also test it and recommend changes. The project manager will need a working group to assist with the customizing of the software.

Because the project manager is imperative to any alternative chosen, that position was not factored into any costs.

Chances of Success

The chances of success for this project are high. State agencies have embraced this project as something that is a benefit to them not just a Governor's directive. Some agencies have had some experience in past disasters in the state that have shown them that they weren't as prepared as they possibly could have been. Other agencies observing what those agencies went through realize that it could be them the next time and want to ensure that they are ready to respond.

Having an identified project manager that can assist agencies through the process will ensure success of this project. Also having a working group that does the unique customizing enables them to serve as mentors to the other agencies, which can increase the success of the project.

Project Approval

Role	Name	Signature	Date
Project Sponsor	Johanna M. Zschomler, Chair of COG Team		
Project Manager	Janell Quinlan		
ITD Project Oversight Analysis	Philip Miller		